

To the Pioneers of Utah
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From the Journal of Andrew Fjeld

Webster defines a Pioneer as the first explorer of a country. The Mormon definition is, A Pioneer is the First Settler of a country.

Those who entered the Salt Lake Valley 96 years ago next Saturday, are known as the Original Pioneers.

Now we designate as Pioneers all who crossed plains and came to Utah before the advent of the Transcontinental Railway in 1869.

Ten years ago we had forty of these Pioneers living in Lehi-now we have only six. They are Heber C. Comer and Margaret Davis of the First Ward (author later crossed these out); Julia Austin Brown and Harriet Jackson Brooks Smith of the Second Ward (author later penciled in Parley Austin); Jane Goodie Lewis and Charles F. Johnson of the Third Ward; and Thomas Jones and his sister Mary Jane Comer of the Fourth Ward. Joseph Kirkham who died quite recently was the last Pioneer in the Fifth Ward.

In the original pioneer company were 143 men, 3 women, 2 children, 73 wagons, 93 horses, 52 mules, 66 oxen, 19 cows, 17 dogs, 1 cannon and a few chickens. Three of the men were darkies and two of these men, Tunis Rappley and John W Norton, later lived in Lehi. Two were non-members.

This company left Winter Quarters April 18 and arrived in Salt Lake Valley July 24, 1847, thus making the journey of about a thousand miles in 97 days. No lives were lost nor any serious accidents happened.

During the first year, 1847, twelve companies entered the valley making a total of 1,095 souls to spend the first winter in the valley.

It is estimated that between 1847 and 1869, 22 years, 200 organized trains crossed the plains for Utah. Some of them had as high as 500 wagons and many hundreds of men, women and children. 80,000 pioneers came to Utah in this way, over 5,000 died on the way.

Utah has been settled by a variety of pioneers. The great and overwhelming majority of which were pioneers because of their religious faith. They came here because of the Gospel.

Some became Mormon Pioneers because of their love of adventure. They simply drifted west looking for the unusual and were caught in the Gospel net and remained put. Two examples- Peter Schow and John Mason.

Quite a number of men scattered up and down the country (they are all dead) owe their pioneering status to the fact that at one time they were members of the celebrated Johnston's Army who came west to set in order the unruly Mormons. Joe Moody, and William Snyder of Fairfield, are examples.

Others again were carried west in the mad rush for gold who discovered something in Utah which was of more value to them than all the gold in California. These after a brief investigation and a most severe internal mental struggle with themselves became humble, sincere Mormon Pioneers.